

CURRENT LITERATURE.

A guide to wild flowers.

That there is a deep popular interest in the flowers of the field must have impressed itself upon any person who was so fortunate as to be a part of the very large audience that saw the projections of the colored lantern slides of Mr. and Mrs. Van Brunt in Springfield during the recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The spontaneous and enthusiastic applause, especially when a favorite flower came upon the screen, made it manifest that it was not the beauty of the representations alone that attracted the audience, but an intelligent interest in the different species of plants. The success of Mrs. Dana's guide¹ to the wild flowers, which has now reached its twenty-seventh thousand, is another evidence of the same fact.

The work has been enlarged and improved in the present edition, but not changed in character from the earlier edition, which was noticed in these pages.² The volume will be of assistance to many persons who would not take the trouble to look up the names of plants in a technical work, and it will be read by some who are simply interested in the author's well written account of the different flowers. The illustrations are an attractive feature of the volume. They have a certain artistic merit, but possess little of the characteristic pose and texture of the individual plants, and are not likely to be of great aid to the novice in locating a plant in hand.

In short it seems to us that the volume is a very poor one with which to study the flora of a region, but a very good one to have at hand for occasional assistance and information. For the niche in which it belongs the book is an admirable one, and most welcome, but it is not to be expected that it will serve the purpose of a strict manual. The author intimates that it was written to meet the demand of those who wish to name flowers "without the trouble of analyzing them." Bearing this limitation in mind, we have little else but praise for the work. The volume is well written and attractively printed and bound.

¹ DANA, MRS. WILLIAM STARR: How to know the wild flowers; a guide to the names, haunts, and habits of our common wild flowers. Illustrated by Marion Satterlee. Revised and enlarged edition. 12mo. pp. xvii + 373. pl. 156. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons. 1895. \$1.75.

² 18: 319. 1893.